



"There is a transcendent power in example. We reform others unconsciously when we walk uprightly."

—Anne Sophie Swetchine

29-Aug-08

First Things First (Part Three): Walking With God

The story of Enoch gives the second prerequisite to witnessing faithfully for [God](#): *walking with God*. However, before one can walk with God, one must be at [peace](#) with God and have access to Him. Thus, Abel's example precedes Enoch's example, and they both precede Noah's example of faithfully witnessing for God. [Hebrews 11:5-6](#) tells us,

By [faith](#) Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him" [[Genesis 5:24](#)]; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Because Enoch diligently sought Him, God rewarded Enoch with a powerful testimony that He was well-pleased with him. The testimony was Enoch's physical removal to another location so that he escaped the violent wrath of those to whom he was prophesying.

As verse 6 indicates, Enoch's seeking of God did not have to do with trying to *find* God, for it is impossible for any man to seek God out in this way ([John 6:44](#), 65). Enoch pursued God so that he could be *like* Him. Genesis 5 records twice that "Enoch walked with God" (verses 22, 24), showing that he not only believed that God existed, but also that he demonstrated his belief by following all that God said. That Enoch was taken away "by faith" means that he must have heard a promise by God of physical deliverance, and he trusted in the promise. God promised such a thing to Enoch because he pleased Him in the conduct of his life.

[Amos 3:3](#) records God rhetorically asking Israel, "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" The only way a nation, organization, or individual can "walk with God" is if it or he conforms to the *way* God walks—and not just the time and place. If it were just a matter of two humans walking together, an agreement could be reached through compromise. But when walking with God, *we* must change to be in agreement with Him, a change that is possible only by [seeking God](#) *in order to be like Him*, as Enoch did. "Walking with God" thus symbolizes the way we approach our relationship with God on a continual basis, always moving toward the goal of being exactly like Him.

Adam's [sin](#) cut man off from communion with God. Previously, God had freely associated with man in the Garden. However, when sin entered the scene, suddenly God and man no longer walked in step ([Genesis 3:8](#)). God was still walking with purity, [holiness](#), and righteousness, but man was walking with defilement. All [contact with God](#) soon came to an end, which could be restored only by those who made an acceptable substitutionary sacrifice. Those making such a sacrifice had to trust that God would accept their token on the basis of a later, perfect Sacrifice.

Only after he has access to God once again is a person's walk with God restored. Faith undergirds the walk with God, meaning that it must be according to His Word ([Romans 10:17](#)). A man's walk is pleasing to God only when it is in agreement with how God walks.

This is important because to the degree that we conduct ourselves like God is also the degree to which we will be a faithful witness of Him. This is why

[Jesus Christ](#) could confidently say, "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father." Christ's walk was in perfect agreement with the Father, and thus He is given the title "Faithful Witness" in [Revelation 1:5](#) and 3:14. He is the faithful witness because He is a true and complete representation of the Father, a state of being that can result only from walking with Him.

Consider this principle in light of the recent history of the church of God. The biblical record is clear that God scatters His people when they surrender to sin and unbelief. The church of God is in its present condition because it was not walking in God's way. As in Eden, God never changed, but the church became defiled and began disagreeing with God over how to walk.

Many people assumed that the problem was with the doctrinal changes, and concluded that as soon as the doctrines were straightened out, everything would be fine. Though it is a large factor, doctrine is not the totality of the equation. An organization may have a perfect creed and set of beliefs, but if it is not *walking by faith* and *resembling God* in deed and in truth, it will not produce the witness that God is seeking. Doctrine defines the path, but the walk must still be by faith.

The progression of examples within Hebrews 11 shows us the proper order of things. Making a faithful witness for God comes at the *end* of that progression. It cannot be made if we are not like God. We cannot resemble God if we are not walking with Him, spending time with Him, making Him an everyday reality, and seeking Him. Further, we cannot even seek Him without first having access to Him and peace with Him.

Considering that the Body of Christ is made up of individual members who are each vitally important in their respective roles and responsibilities ([I Corinthians 12:12-27](#)), the Body cannot faithfully witness for God without its members first resembling Him. The spiritual health of the Body depends on the spiritual health of *all* the members, not just those involved in the public witness to [the world](#).

In the final part of this series, we will consider Noah, the "preacher of righteousness."

- David C. Grabbe

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[God, the Church's Greatest Problem](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

If we are not moving forward, we will be swept back into the world. The warnings given to the people addressed by Amos and Isaiah were people (like us) who had already made a covenant with Him. Despite their having made the covenant with God, they did not really know God. After we have been called by God, we have to seek Him and His way, realizing that our conduct is motivated by our concept of God. We must be continually seeking God and living the way God lives. Abraham, when he was asked to sacrifice Isaac, added up what He knew about God, calculating that Isaac was the promised seed and would have to be replaced or resurrected. Eternal life is more than endless life, but the quality of life God lives. Coming to know God is the church's biggest problem. Romans 1:20 teaches that God's nature can be seen in the creation itself, but failure to have awe before God and to love Him leads to a confused reprobate mind. Whatever people worship, they will become.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Praying Always \(Part Five\)](#)

by Pat Higgins

Praying always and watching—or overcoming—affect every facet of a Christian's life. Pat Higgins relates how deeply examining ourselves for flaws and shortcomings, as we do each year before Passover, helps us to accomplish Christ's Luke 21:36 command.

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